

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00433 070710Z
ACTION SS-25

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R 061557Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6888
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0433

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, SF
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: INCIDENT IN BOTSWANA

REF: GABORONE 0562,

1. DURING THE COURSE OF HAROLD HAWKINS' MEETING WITH ME MARCH 3 TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS IN RHODESIA HE ALSO PROVIDED THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT VERSION OF THE FEB. 27 INCIDENT IN BOTSWANA. ACCORDING TO HAWKINS A GUERRILLA FORCE THAT DAY ATTACKED A RHODESIAN PATROL INSIDE RHODESIA. FOUR RHODESIAN SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED, THREE LIGHTLY AND ONE SERIOUSLY.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, A RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCE UNIT, INCLUDING BOTH WHITE AND BLACK SOLDIERS, TRACKED THE GUERRILLAS ACROSS THE BORDER INTO BOTSWANA WHERE THEY DISCOVERED A SMALL GUERRILLA CAMP. THE RHODESIANS STAKED OUT THE CAMP AND SOMETIME LATER OBSERVED THREE BOTSWANA
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ARMY VEHICLES FULL OF SOLDIERS ENTER THE CAMP. AROUND DUSK WHEN THE VEHICLES DEPARTED, THE RHODESIANS OBSERVED PERSONNEL IN THE VEHICLES WHO WERE NOT IN BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE UNIFORMS AND THE RHODESIANS OPENED FIRE. HAWKINS SAID THAT THE RHODESIANS HAD RECOVERED FOUR BODIES WITH SOVIET AK-47S.

3. HAWKINS CHARGED THAT THE ENTRY OF BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE VEHICLES INTO GUERRILLA CAMPS AND THEIR TRANSPORTATION OF GUERRILLA PERSONNEL WAS EVIDENCE OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE BOTSWANA ARMY AND THE GUERRILLAS. THIS WAS A TYPE OF COLLABORATION WHICH, HAWKINS SAID, THE MOZAMBIQUE AND ZAMBIAN MILITARY WERE TOO WISE TO ENGAGE IN.

4. COMMENT. IF THE FACTS AS RELAYED BY HAWKINS ARE CORRECT, THE INCIDENT WOULD SEEM TO REFLECT AN AGGRESSIVE HOT PURSUIT POLICY BY THE RHODESIANS, INCLUDING AUTHORITY TO ATTACK BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE UNITS IF THEY ARE SUSPECTED OF TRANSPORTING GUERRILLAS.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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